FBIS DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

24 DECEMBER 1984

ICO Foreign Ministers' Conference in Sanaa

The communique issued by the ICO foreign ministers at the end of the conference, broadcast by Sanaa radio, noted their decision to call on Iran and Iraq to "totally and sincerely cooperate" with the ICO peace committee in order to immediately end the Gulf war and resolve the conflict on a "just and honorable" basis. The conference also appealed to both sides to pay due consideration to the rules of Islamic law and the Geneva Convention on POW's and to the Geneva protocol on chemical weapons. Both agreed to this resolution and the Iraqi delegation leader announced that his country will adhere to it in letter and spirit, the communique added.

However, Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz subsequently accused Iran of tricking the conference by pretending to agree to the resolution on the war in order to avoid a "stronger" resolution, but then disavowing it, according to INA. The disavowal referred to by 'Aziz was contained in Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati's press conference, reported by IRNA, in which he stated that Iran will not agree to a negotiated settlement while the present Iraqi regime remains in power, adding that Iran will only heed that part of the ICO resolution on the war which addresses the two countries in an "identical" tone. Conference sources cited by KUNA explained that Velayati's reservations about the resolution were directed against the paragraph "praising" Iraq. The resolution, which was carried by INA, had taken note of Iraq's agreement to cooperate with the ICO peace committee. This was not mentioned in the conference final communique broadcast by Sanaa radio.

As for the Palestine question, which was described as the "primary issue" facing Muslims, the communique stressed that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, adding that UN Resolution 242 is "incompatible" with Palestinian rights and is not a sound basis for resolving the problem. The conference stressed that no Arab side should individually attempt to solve this conflict and emphasized the need to nullify the Camp David accords and "any initiative" stemming from them. This resolution "opposing the expansion of Camp David" was one of the proposals submitted by Iran, Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati disclosed in a Tehran radio interview.

Among the other issues mentioned in the final communique, the conference expressed concern over Afghan violations of Pakistani territory, noting the Pakistani Government's "self-restraint" toward these "provocative" actions. The conference also denounced all forms of international terrorism, urging ICO member states not to submit to demands made by aircraft hijackers. On organizational matters, the final communique noted that the conference had unanimously elected Pakistani Attorney General Sharifuddin Pirzada to succeed Habib Chatti as ICO secretary general starting in 1985.

Jordanian Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri questioned the effectiveness of the conference in an Amman radio interview, asserting that its resolutions are mere "ink on paper" which will not be followed up by the ICO Secretariat and which are unlikely to have any influence in the international arena.

Gulf War

Fires aboard two tankers hit in Iraqi air attacks on 21 December were brought under control as the ships were towed out of the war zone over the weekend, according to shipping sources cited by the *GULF DAILY NEWS*. Two crewmen of the smaller, Liberian-registered vessel were killed, the paper said, but there were no casualties aboard the larger ship, a Norwegian supertanker, which was hit shortly after loading with Iranian crude oil at Khark Island. Iraq's "devastating" raid on the two "large maritime targets" was announced in the Iraqi military communique for 21 December, broadcast by Baghdad radio.

Lebanon

Despite the continuing violence, the Military Council approved the security plan for the coastal road and the Al-Kharrub area during a 23 December meeting held in a "positive atmosphere" and attended by representatives of all parties concerned, according to sources cited by the clandestine Voice of Arab Lebanon radio. After further discussion of the plan, the Cabinet will fix 27 or 28 December as the date for implementation, the radio added.

OPEC Conference in Geneva

The OPEC oil ministers suspended their talks on 21 December for 6 days pending consultations with their respective governments on a proposal to increase OPEC's supervision of oil production by its member countries, IRNA reported. Iran will support the proposal for a more powerful monitoring committee, according to remarks by the Iranian oil minister cited by the agency. The Iranian Oil Ministry subsequently issued a statement, reported by Tehran radio, urging OPEC states to support the proposal and warning that failure to do so will lead to a price war in which oil prices will fall to $15 per barrel.

Iranian Judiciary

The judiciary is an independent power which should be strengthened and no one should prevent implementation of judicial verdicts or create a hostile "climate" against them, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni declared in remarks broadcast by Tehran radio on 23 December.

Israel

The police are detaining six Gaza residents who have admitted planning to attack the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv on 2 December,

Jerusalem radio disclosed. Although the affair was publicized abroad recently, the authorities withheld publication of the incident inside Israel until 23 December, the radio noted.

Jordan

A 17 December clash between the Jordanian Army and a Palestinian dissident group attempting to carry out operations against the Israelis on the West Bank resulted in some casualties, Voice of Lebanon radio disclosed, citing Palestinian sources. A spokesman for the dissidents warned Jordan of the consequences of such acts and threatened to strike at the Jordanian regime, the radio added.

In a separate development reported on Amman television, after arriving in Amman PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat met with King Husayn to discuss the Middle East and PLO-Jordanian coordination.

The king also met with a delegation of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) which is currently visiting Jordan, Amman radio reported. Talks with the PLA delegation will concern possible Chinese arms supplies for Jordan, AFP said. China is ready to consider any Jordanian request for arms or military assistance, but so far the subject has not been broached, according to a Chinese official cited by *THE JORDAN TIMES*.

Mauritania

In a speech reported by Nouakchott radio, President Maayouia Sidi Ahmed Ould Taya pronounced an amnesty for 69 political prisoners, including two former presidents and one prime minister. Furthermore, he declared that Mauritania will adopt an "open" policy toward the world, the radio noted.

Afghanistan

Border Protests — A DRA charge of cross-border fire from Pakistan into Konarha Province on 18 December was officially denied by Pakistan, Karachi radio reported. The DRA, on the other hand, rejected "vain and unfounded" Pakistani accusations of having violated Pakistani airspace on 25 and 29 November and 6 December, Kabul radio disclosed. In a further charge reported by Karachi radio, Pakistan protested an airspace violation by the DRA on 22 December.

Mujahidin Clashes — In Badghis and Herat Provinces, mujahidin killed 180 Soviet and DRA soldiers in a series of military operations, IRNA reported. Last week the mujahidin also broke the siege of western Herat, but in the DRA-Soviet forces' retaliatory shelling 117 civilians were killed, the agency disclosed.

Pakistan Referendum

The chief election commissioner announced that there was a 97.7 affirmative vote in support of President Ziaul Haq's Islamization program in the 19 December national referendum, with 21,750,757 of the 34,992,425 registered voters casting valid ballots, Karachi radio reported.

FBIS **DAILY REPORT**

CONTENTS

South Asia

Vol VIII No 248 *24 December 1984*

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW i

AFGHANISTAN

Kabul Protests Pakistani Aggression, Allegations ..... C 1
Condolences on Ustinov's Death Transmitted ..... C 1
Clandestine Broadcast on Power Struggle in Kabul *[Voice of Islamic Revolution of Afghanistan]* ..... C 1

BANGLADESH

General Strike Call Causes Violence, Casualties ..... D 1
AFP: Opposition Urges Observance ..... D 1
AFP: Capital at Standstill ..... D 1
Clashes, Bombings Reported ..... D 2
'Normal Activities' Continue ..... D 2
Country Termed 'Peaceful' ..... D 2
Two Killed in Rajshahi ..... D 2

INDIA

Gandhi Regrets Failure of Colombo Ethnic Meeting ..... E 1
Gandhi Sends Condolences on Death of Ustinov ..... E 1
Minister of Labor, Rehabilitation Dies ..... E 1
Reportage on Lok Sabha, Assembly Elections ..... E 1
Voting Begins ..... E 1
No 'Ballot Papers' Missing ..... E 1
'Brisk Polling' Reported ..... E 1
Election Violence Claims 15 ..... E 2
Renewal of Union Carbide License Refused ..... E 2

PAKISTAN

President Thanks Nation for Plebiscite Approval ..... F 1
Further Details ..... F 1
AFP: Police Clash With Demonstrators in Lahore ..... F 2
Foreign Minister Hopes To Improve Ties With India ..... F 2

OTHER COUNTRIES

SRI LANKA

Jayewardene on Terrorism, Indian Stand on Tamils ..... G 1
Terrorist Attack at Point Pedro 'Foiled' ..... G 1
Delhi Cites Athulathmudali on Point Pedro Attack ..... G 1
Delhi on Cabinet Differences on Ethnic Bill ..... G 1
Industries Minister Mathew Resigns ..... G 1

IRAN

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Raps Islamic, OPEC Conferences ..... I 1
Joint Staff Command Issues Battle Communiques ..... I 1
Communique No 1948 ..... I 1
Communique No 1949 ..... I 2
Communique No 1950 ..... I 2

Foreign Minister Velayati on Gulf War, ICO ..... I 2
Says War 'Will Continue' *[KUNA]* ..... I 2
Reiterates Demands for Cease-Fire ..... I 2
Comments on ICO Meeting ..... I 3
'Reservations' With Preamble Praising Iraq *[KUNA]* ..... I 3
Oil Ministry Issues Statement on OPEC Conference ..... I 4

Kabul Protests Pakistani Aggression, Allegations

LD221747 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 22 Dec 84

[Text] A spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said today that the aggressive Pakistani forces again targeted their heavy and long-range weapons on the 55th regiment, Barikot region, Konar Province, on 18 December. As a result of this barbarous violation one officer was martyred, eight soldiers were seriously injured, and three houses were totally destroyed.

In connection with this violation, the official in charge of the 1st Political Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned the charge d'affaires of the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul at 1130 today and made the following statement to him:

The DRA vigorously condemns these armed and irresponsible aggressions by Pakistan's military forces and therefore strongly protests to the Government of Pakistan, and again draws the attention of the Pakistani authorities to the serious consequences and unpleasant results of these aggressions and repeated armed provocations in the territory of the DRA, the responsibility for which rests entirely with the Islamabad authorities.

The official of the 1st Political Department also pointed out to the charge d'affaires of the Pakistani Embassy the allegations of that country regarding so-called flights of Afghan aircraft in Pakistani airspace on 25 and 29 November and 6 December. The relevant authorities of the DRA totally rejects these vain and unfounded accusations aimed at concealing the vain [as heard], armed, and repeated aggressions by Pakistan in the territory of the DRA. In strongly protesting this, the DRA asks the Government of Pakistan to halt as soon as possible its hostile propaganda and provocation which have been launched together with armed aggression against the DRA and which have no other purpose but to create tension in the region.

Condolences on Ustinov's Death Transmitted

LD222005 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 22 Dec 84

[Text] On behalf of the PDPA Central Committee, the Presidium of the Revolutionary Council, and the Council of Ministers of the DRA, the following telegram of condolences has been sent to Moscow by Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the DRA Revolutionary Council, and Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, member of the Politburo of the PDPA Central Committee and chairman of the DRA Council of Ministers, addressed to the CPSU Central Committee, Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and Council of Ministers of the USSR on the death of Dmitriy Fedorovich Ustinov, member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee and minister of defense of the Soviet Union:

To the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and the Council of Ministers of the USSR:

On behalf of the PDPA Central Committee, the Presidium of the Revolutionary Council, and Council of Ministers of the DRA and all people of Afghanistan, we express profound sorrow and condolences on the death of Comrade Dmitriy Fedorovich Ustinov, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo, USSR minister of defense, and marshal of the Soviet Union. Dmitriy Fedorovich Ustinov, distinguished state and party personality and great military figure, dedicated all his power and energy to the cause of socialism, consolidation of the defense capabilities of the Soviet Union, and the preservation and strengthening of peace in the world. As national commissar for armaments of the USSR during the difficult years of the Great Patriotic War, Dmitriy Fedorovich Ustinov helped to strengthen the combat capabilities of the Armed Forces of the USSR, its victory over Hitlerite fascism and Japanese militarism.

The proud life of Dmitriy Fedorovich Ustinov, who developed from an ordinary worker to one of the leaders of his country is a glorious example of honest service to the people's interests, the state of the Soviet Union and the CPSU.

The people of Afghanistan with the death of Dmitriy Fedorovich Ustinov have lost a great friend who had a significant role in developing and strengthening fraternal Afghan-Soviet friendship, giving internationalist assistance to the DRA to defend the gains of the revolution, national sovereignty and national independence against foreign aggression by international imperialism, Chinese hegemonism, and the reaction of the region. Expressing profound respect to the glorious memory of Dmitriy Fedorovich Ustinov, the people of the DRA fully share the mourning of the people of the Soviet Union for this great loss.

[Signed] Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the DRA Revolutionary Council; Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, chairman of the DRA Council of Ministers.

Clandestine Broadcast on Power Struggle in Kabul

GF211920 [Clandestine] Voice of Islamic Revolution of Afghanistan in Dari 1715 GMT 21 Dec 84

[Text] According to news and reports received from Kabul, it is reported that the extent of differences in the Karmal puppet regime has grown and the power struggle between the factions of the Parcham and Khalq parties is intensifying. There are rumors about this in Kabul based on the possibility of the replacement of the Babrak Karmal regime's being replaced. Power is presently in the hands of the Parcham Party, but two members of the Khalq Party are in charge of the Ministries of Defense and (Economy).

General Strike Call Causes Violence, Casualties

AFP: Opposition Urges Observance

HK211616 Hong Kong AFP in English 1607 GMT 21 Dec 84

[Text] Dhaka, Dec 21 (AFP) — A torch-light protest march wound through central Dhaka late today, after opposition parties told citizens to observe a banned general strike planned for tomorrow and Sunday.

Meanwhile a Bangladesh trade union which joined in the general strike call said large numbers of its leaders and workers had been arrested around the country.

The SKOP, a united federation of industrial workers and employees of autonomous bodies including banks, said that in particular three leaders had been arrested in Dhaka in the past two days.

Some 500 people shouting slogans joined the anti-government rally today and other protests reportedly took place elsewhere in the city, notably at volatile Dhaka University.

Opposition sources said there had been large scale arrests of political workers and trade union leaders during the last two days, but did not give details.

The 15- and seven-party alliances today urged their supporters to obey the 48-hour strike call in protest against martial law, after the government yesterday banned the union-backed strike under its martial law powers.

An official source said 290 people had been taken into custody under preventive laws in the last two days in the capital, but said most were street urchins or known trouble makers.

The alliances called upon people to observe the 48-hour general strike to "realise the popular demands" of free elections and a return to civilian rule.

Meanwhile, the government headed by President Hussain Mohammad Ershad in a statement today said that adequate security measures had been taken to maintain normal and peaceful life in Dhaka and other towns during the threatened strike.

Informed sources said the army had been kept on full alert to help the normal law enforcing agencies which included police and the para-police force, Ansar. The para-military border force, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), had also been put on standby for tomorrow.

The SKOP said negotiations which were going on with Prime Minister Ataur Rahman Khan on its demands had proved abortive. It urged its members to make the strike a success.

Most Dhaka newspapers omitted the two alliances' calls to support the strike, and did not specify penalties for ignoring the ban. Violation of martial law orders has often carried a maximum seven-year jail term and fines.

SKOP called the strike to demand implementation of an agreement signed with the government last May on pay and service conditions and trade union rights.

Observers did not rule out sporadic violence tomorrow if the government and its political opponents failed to reach an understanding by late today.

Dhaka University authorities have postponed final examinations scheduled for tomorrow and Sunday for "unavoidable reasons".

The strike ban came less than a week after military President Hussain Muhammad Ershad pledged to hold general elections next April and bring about a phased withdrawal of martial law.

The two opposition alliances spearheading the 23-month movement against his 33-month old military government rejected President Ershad's latest offer on a transition to democracy, saying they were not convinced of its sincerity.

AFP: Capital at Standstill

HK220600 Hong Kong AFP in English 0530 GMT 22 Dec 84

[Text] Dhaka, Dec 22 (AFP) — Despite a two-day government ban on political activities and strikes, the Bangladesh capital today came to a virtual standstill in response to a 48-hour general strike in protest against martial law.

The strike was called by the major political groupings and a federation of industrial workers and employees of autonomous organizations.

Troops on armoured vehicles fitted with machine guns patrolled virtually traffic-free streets this morning as thousands of people walked leisurely to their offices.

Police and the para-military border force also patrolled the streets at strategic points. There was no immediate report of any violence.

Only a very few state-owned buses under police protection were seen on some main routes but no private vehicles were circulating.

Dhaka newspapers today made no mention of the nationwide strike, originally called by the federation (SKOP) representing over 300,000 industrial workers and employees of autonomous bodies. The strike is actively backed by the two alliences of 15 and seven parties and the rightist Jamat-E-Islami Party. The SKOP's strike call was aimed at forcing the government to implement different wages and trade union agreements reached between the military regime of President Hussain Muhammad Ershad and the SKOP since late last year.

The opposition alliances yesterday urged their supporters to observe the strike in protest against martial law.

The 33-month-old military regime of General Ershad on Thursday issued a martial law order banning political activities, including strikes and public meetings, for today and tomorrow.

A journalist leader today said an unofficial restriction on press had been in force prohibiting the publication of any news which went against the ban.

Clashes, Bombings Reported

HK220714 Hong Kong AFP in English 0703 GMT 22 Dec 84

[Text] Dhaka, Dec 22 (AFP) — One person was killed and five others wounded when police fired on a group of picketers trying to block a railway track in the western university town of Rajshahi, according to a still unconfirmed report reaching here.

The report said the man killed in police firing was a student leader organising the picketing at the university station, about 200 kms (124 miles) northwest of here. It said five others were wounded.

Officials in Dhaka could not be reached immediately for confirmation of the report. Officials in Rajshahi, reached by telephone, declined to confirm or deny the report.

Meanwhile, in the capital Dhaka, reports said a bomb thrown shortly before midday on one of the few state-owned buses operating here today left three persons injured. The bus was badly damaged.

In another incident near the opposition Awami League Party office in the crowded Gulistan area of the city, two people were reported wounded in bomb-throwing from a building. Police later charged with batons and arrested a number of people in the area, the reports said.

The incidents came on the first day of a 48-hour general strike called by a Federation of Industrial Workers and employees of Autonomous Organizations. The strike is backed by the country's major opposition political alliances in protest against martial law.

The government on Thursday banned all political activities and strikes today and tomorrow.

'Normal Activities' Continue

BK220732 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0700 GMT 22 Dec 84

[Excerpts] Adequate measures have been taken by the government to ensure smooth and uninterrupted movement of vehicular traffic including trucks, bus, baby taxi, and rickshaw in Dhaka metropolitan area today and tomorrow. Train, launch, and steamer services, as well as Biman [Airlines] flights have also been ensured. Measures have also been taken to keep vegetable markets and shopping centers open. According to latest reports from the city and other parts of the country, normal activities are going on in government, semigovernment, commercial, and other establishments.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation sources told our newsdesk this morning that the tram service started operating this morning and buses are plying as usual — including the Dhaka-[name indistinct] service. Private vehicles, including rickshaws, are also plying. Railway sources said that the mail train Ulka left Dhaka for Chittagong at about 0835, while the Chittagong Mail reached Kamalapur station on schedule this morning. According to Biman sources, the Dhaka-Sylhet left from the Zia International Airport on schedule and returned also on time. The Dhaka-Chittagong flight also left at 1030. International flights are also operating normally. Biman Calcutta flight also left on schedule this morning. Biman flight from Jidda also reached Dhaka a short while ago.

In the metropolis, government, semigovernment, and corporation are functioning as usual, while mills and factories opened in the industrial belt of Tongi, Demra, and (Pasatagola). Reports from northern districts of Rajshahi and Rangpur said rickshaws are plying on streets, while life continues to be normal elsewhere.

Country Termed 'Peaceful'

BK231723 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1705 GMT 23 Dec 84

[Text] Life was peaceful throughout the country today despite hartal call by some trade unions and political parties. Government and semigovernment offices, autonomous organizations, courts, banks, and financial institutions functioned smoothly with normal attendance. Work in mills and factories in some industrial areas continued as usual and markets were open at different places.

In Dhaka city, Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation [BRTC] bases, autorickshaws and rickshaws plied, facilitating the movement of people. A press release of the BRTC says it operated 136 buses including double-deckers on different city roads today. BRTC workshops at Joydevpur and Tezgaon functioned as usual. Some private cars were also seen plying.

In Chittagong, loading and unloading of cargo went on as usual at the port today. Mills and factories functioned normally and most of the shops, markets and kacha bazaars [vegetable markets] were open. Loading and unloading of cargo also continued as usual at the Mangla port in Khulna. Four ships reached the port yesterday and five sailed for their destinations today. Train communications between Khulna and other parts of the country were normal. Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation and Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority vessels are plying on schedule.

Two Killed in Rajshahi

BK221740 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1705 GMT 22 Dec 84

[Text] Life in the country was by and large peaceful today and mills and factories — including those in Tongi, Demra, (Postagalai), Ghazipur, and other places — functioned normally. Government, semigovernment, and autonomous offices and financial establishments, including banks, also functioned normally. Workers and employees under Post and Telegraph, electricity and water supply also carried on their duties as usual. Kacha bazaars shopping centers in some areas of Dhaka city were open. Fourteen mail passenger trains left Dhaka and

reached their destinations on schedule. International and domestic flights of the Biman also operated on schedule. Steamers, launches including rocket service [as heard] plied as usual.

In Chittagong normal work continued in government semigovernment and autonomous organizations. Normal activities also continued in the port. In Khulna, train services were normal and Kacha bazaars in the Khulna town were open. Our Jamalpur correspondent says full normal life continued in Jamalpur and Sherpur districts today. Buses, rickshaws, and other vehicles plied normally. Reports coming in from Rajshahi, Bogra, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Nator, and Faridpur say trains, buses and rickshaws are plying normally in these places.

In Rajshahi, two persons, including a student, were killed this morning when police opened fire on an unruly mob in self-defense. A press release issued in Rajshahi tonight said that the Rajshahi administration held a meeting with the Rajshahi University authorities so that the hartal [strike] called by some political parties for today and tomorrow was not observed, since it was declared illegal by the government. The university authorities, after holding meeting with the students, held out the assurance that no clashes will be created in the university campus. The press release regretted that the students uprooted the railway track of the university railway station and put up barricade on the road yesterday night. The press release said some miscreants at first resisted the members of the law enforcing authorities when they went there led by a magistrate to remove the barricade and reinstall the track this morning. At one stage, the miscreants attacked the members of the law enforcing agency with brickbats and sticks.

According to the press release, the police at first tried to disperse the agitated miscreants by issuing verbal warning. Later, they made lathi [baton] charge and fired 16 rounds of tear gas. The attack of the miscreants resulted in the injury of 1 on-duty magistrate, 50 members of the law enforcing agency, and also sustained injuries to others. In such a situation, the members of the law enforcing agency were forced to open fire in self-defense. As a result, two persons, including a student, were killed and two others injured. Arrangements have been made for the treatment of the wounded persons at the hospital. The situation is now calm.

The government and the administration expressed their deep regret at the loss of valuable lives and for those injured due to the step which the administration was compelled to take most reluctantly to restore peace after the failure of all endeavors.

Meanwhile, an official source said six miscreants with a large number of hand bombs in their possession were arrested in Dhaka today.

As already reported, hartal, procession, picketing, public meeting and use of loudspeaker have been banned for today and tomorrow under martial law order. All concerned have been advised to refrain from activities contrary to this order and warned that its violation will be dealt with under martial law.

Members of the public have been advised to contact the nearest police station in case of necessity.

Gandhi Regrets Failure of Colombo Ethnic Meeting

BK220902 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 22 Dec 84

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has expressed regret that no settlement could be arrived at in yesterday's all-party conference held in Colombo to resolve the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka. Addressing a public meeting in Salem in Tamil Nadu today, the prime minister said India will extend all possible help to resolve the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka in a smooth manner. He reiterated that Sri Lankan Tamil refugees of Indian origin coming into India is causing a concern to the people.

It may be recalled that the talks aimed at resolving the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka ended in Colombo yesterday without taking any decisions.

Gandhi Sends Condolences on Death of Ustinov

BK221017 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 22 Dec 84

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has condoled the death of the Soviet defense minister, Marshal Ustinov. In a message, he said in the death of Marshal Ustinov the world has lost an eminent soldier and statesman. The prime minister offered his condolences to the government and the people of the Soviet Union.

Minister of Labor, Rehabilitation Dies

BK220403 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0245 GMT 22 Dec 84

[Excerpt] Mr Dharam Vir, union minister of state for labor and rehabilitation, is dead. He was 48. Mr Dharam Vir, who had suffered a cerebral hemorrhage on the 12th of this month in Allahabad, was flown to New Delhi and admitted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. Since then he remained in a coma. The end came at 0245 [2115 GMT 21 December] this morning.

Reportage on Lok Sabha, Assembly Elections

Voting Begins

BK240350 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0245 GMT 24 Dec 84

[Excerpts] Polling began this morning in the first phase of elections to the eighth Lok Sabha. A total of 27 crore and 80 lakh voters are exercising their franchise to choose a new government at the center. Polling in the elections to the Tamil Nadu and Arunachal Pradesh Assembly is also being held simultaneously. The first ballot was cast around 0730 [0200 GMT] in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu and elsewhere half an hour later in the biggest (?electoral) exercise of the world.

In Tamil Nadu, over 3 crore voters are exercising their franchise to elect their representatives to the 232 representatives to the state assembly also. Our Madras correspondent reports that voting will be for 9 hours in the state because of the simultaneous poll for the state assembly. Armed guards will keep vigil on the ballot boxes after the polling is over till Friday, when the counting of votes will be taken up. About 100 Lok Sabha results are expected to be declared by Friday midnight itself. Another 300 results will be available by midday next day.

No 'Ballot Papers' Missing

BK240402 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0245 GMT 24 Dec 84

[Text] The West Bengal chief electoral officer, Mr Ashok Basu, has denied the allegation of missing ballot papers in the state. He told newsmen in Calcutta that no ballot papers are missing nor are they lost. Mr Basu said in the course of checking ballot papers some misprinted serial numbers were found.

According to the election commission regulation, the returning officer of Mednipur noticed the irregularity and brought it to the notice of the contesting candidates in writing.

'Brisk Polling' Reported

BK240912 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 24 Dec 84

[Excerpts] Brisk polling has been reported from most of the states and union territories in the first phase of the Lok Sabha elections. Polling was particularly heavy in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and Tripura. In all, 379 constituencies in 16 states and 6 union territories are involved in today's polls. Besides, partial polling is being held in 10 constituencies in Uttar Pradesh. Polling is going on simultaneously in Tamil Nadu and Arunachal Pradesh to elect new assemblies.

In Delhi, moderate to heavy polling is reported from different constituencies. By midday, 40 to 50 percent of voters had exercised their franchise at many polling stations. The polling was particularly brisk in Chandni Chowk and Sadar constituencies. An All India Radio correspondent who went round different parts of the capital reports that orderly queues could be seen at all places. According to the chief electoral officer of Delhi, Mr S.C. Vajpayee, polling in the entire Union Territory of Delhi is progressing peacefully. The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, is among the early voters in New Delhi.

In Kerala, about 35 to 40 percent of electorates excercised their franchise by noon, with Quilon accounting for 48 percent. All India Radio Trivandrum correspondent reports that some booths registered as high as 57 percent of polling in the first 3 hours.

The West Bengal chief minister, Mr Jyoti Basu, told newsmen in Calcutta that about 40 to 45 percent of votes were cast in Calcutta and surrounding areas by noon today. He said the polling is still going on peacefully and no untoward incident has been reported from anywhere in the state.

Tripura also reported heavy polling. Our correspondent says that in some areas 30 to 40 percent of voters exercised their franchise by 1130 this morning.

In Uttar Pradesh, despite cold weather sweeping the region, a large number of people were seen in queues at different polling centers.

According to an agency report, an independent candidate, Mr (Harswaroop Vajpayee), contesting for the Lok Sabha from Rae Bareli constituency, succumbed today to serious injuries sustained by him last evening. The death took place after the polling started in the constituency. Quoting district authorities, the report says that polling will continue uninterrupted.

Election Violence Claims 15

HK241010 Hong Kong AFP in English 1000 GMT 24 Dec 84

[By P. P. Ramachandran]

[Text] New Delhi, Dec 24 (AFP) — An electoral candidate and a political supporter died in attacks despite unprecedented security today as voters in the world's largest democracy trooped to the polls to elect a new parliament.

Har Swarup Bajpai, who is standing as an independent for Rae Bareli in norther Uttar Pradesh state, died of wounds today after an attack last night.

Another person died when rival supporters of the ruling Congress and pro-Moscow Communist Parties exchanged gunfire in Jehangbad in the volatile northeastern state of Bihar. The victim was communist, an official report quoted by PRESS TRUST OF INDIA said, adding one arrest was made.

At least 15 people have now died in poll-related violence in the past two days, although the army was on standby today and paramilitary forces were deployed in some areas in support, PTI said.

Another 10 people have been injured, it said, at least four in northernmost Jammu and Kashmir state, where crowds stormed polling booths at several places in Anantnag constituency. Voting was suspended briefly there, PTI said.

Poor to moderate polling was reported up to noon from various centres, including the capital. This was attributed to cold weather and voting was expected to pick up in the afternoon.

About two thirds of the 378 million voters are involved in the election for the 544-seat lower house of Parliament (Lok Sabha) which is to continue on Thursday and Friday.

Voting, spread across more than 370 constituencies in 16 provinces and six federally administered territories, is to continue on Thursday and Friday.

In the Amethi constituency, where Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi is running against his sister-in-law Menaka, half a dozen people were injured in a clash involving her supporters, PTI said, but did not specify who the other side were.

PTI said the clash occurred after Mrs. Gandhi accussed poll officials at Ramgarh voting station of vote rigging. This sparked heated exchanges between two sides, which were then followed up with truncheons and brickbats.

Mrs. Gandhi demanded a repoll at that booth, but no decision on the matter had yet been taken.

Amethi borders Rae Bareli, where Mr. Bajpai died after the attack. Arun Nehru, general secretary of the ruling Congress Party and related to the prime minister, is also contesting this seat, earlier held by the late Premier Indira Gandhi.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and his Italian-born wife, Sonia Gandhi, were among the early voters in Delhi. They exercised their franchise at Tuglak Road booth, about half a kilometre from the prime minister's house.

Unprecedented security was in force for the elections, particularly in the north, apparently chiefly because of anti-Sikh violence in November, triggered by the slaying of Indira Gandhi by two Sikh securitymen.

But despite fears that Sikhs in Delhi, the worst hit in November incidents, might keep away from voting, many Sikhs were seen early at some booths.

Polls have been postponed in the northern state of Punjab and in Assam for public-security reasons. Snow in two districts is keeping keep people from reaching voting stations, while in two others the candidates have died.

In addition, an unopposed seat in Mizoram has already been given to the ruling Congress (I) Party, and two other M.P.'s are named by the federal president to represent the Anglo-Indian community.

The political fortunes of more than 4,000 candidates — 80 per cent of those involved — will be decided by late today. Official results will be known late December 28 at the earliest, commission officials said.

More than 600 million rupees (50 million dollars) is being spent on the poll. Two million people are helping to organise the operations at 473,886 voting offices and about 1.3 million ballot boxes are in use.

Renewal of Union Carbide License Refused

BK231252 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 23 Dec 84

[Text] The Madhya Pradesh government has refused to renew the license of the Union Carbide factory in Bhopal for next year. According to a state government official, the renewal has been refused on grounds of breach of provisions of safety resulting in loss of more than 2,000 lives. The chief minister said that the Varadarajan committee which studied the consequences of the gas leakage found that the air and water in Bhopal is free from toxicity.

President Thanks Nation for Plebiscite Approval

GF211730 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1314 GMT 21 Dec 84

[Speech by President Ziaul Haq to nation — live or recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. My dear (?compatriots) greetings to you. Thousands of thanks to almighty God. You have given your decision on the referendum according to your conscience. Pakistan has thus entered a new chapter of its history. 19 December is an important day in the history of Pakistan, even in the history of the region. The fervent expressions by the young and old of the country supporting the referendum are examplary.

A historic decision was taken on 19 December. It was through the kindness of God. I am grateful for the fervor and zeal in which the nation responded to my call. This decision has been taken by the nation after so many years.

The movement was started by the Afghan, Sir Seyyed Ahmad Khan. It reached into the 20th century to include Allama Iqbal. They wanted a separate piece of land where they could practice their religion freely. For this purpose a new country was born. Millions of people were killed during the emigration. Their honor and wealth was lost. What was the motive behind this? Efforts were made under our own eyes to turn the attention of the public away from Islam.

The last government wanted to take the Muslims to some other side. It was said that there was no need for an Islamic system here. We thought that before we took other measures we had better decide this issue once and for all whether there was a need for Islam or not, whether people want Islam or not. We decided to let the people make the decision themselves.

Many friends advised me not to go ahead with this, saying there are a number of dangers in it. There may be success and there may be failure. You should not risk your present legal position for uncertainty. Nobody could say with certainty what would be the feelings of the people. But my view and those of my colleagues was different. We thought that the referendum was meant not to give power to one single person but to introduce a system in the country. The foundation of this system is the Holy Koran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet (may peace be upon Him).

Such a system, a system close to martyrdom, is dearer to us than our own lives.

The sea of Islam is in Mecca. It is flowing from Karachi to Peshawar and from village to village. My 10-day tour was meant to meet the lovers of Islam. They gave me a lot of their affection and love. We have to become united as in one life. This historic decision was a result of their efforts. While doing service to our religion we also gained a worldly (?lot). You people eat and drink, but you should also keep religion in mind.

You may acquire property, but according to Islamic law, you should pay the Zakat and the Ushra [tenth of the farmer's income]. God willing, the fruits of the Islamic system will be seen by you very soon.

It is you who made the referendum successful. The referendum was made just as you made the birth of Pakistan possible. I have to thank the religious leaders, who showed the correct way of Islam.

I have to thank those who offer prayers, those who give Zakat and those who administer the Zakat funds. I have to thank the toilers, the farmers. I have to thank the minorities who took a major part in the referendum. They know their rights are protected in Pakistan. I have to thank the voters. They ran from place to place in search of ballot boxes. I have to thank elderly men and women, who in spite of extreme cold took part in the voting. I thank all those who voted only for the sake of Islam. They worked hard, verbally by propaganda and also through their writing. They encouraged the people to walk the path of Islam.

I have to thank heartily my mothers, sisters, and daughters who voted without any persuation. Polling booths were full of such women, where there were educated and noneducated women shoulder to shoulder, rich women and poor women, women from rural areas and urban. I assure them that they will be given the same rights which are given to them by God Almighty and his Prophet.

I have to thank all rank and file, and also the Election Commission, because they worked day and night to make full arrangements for the referendum. I have to thank the administration also who worked hard and those who expressed their views without any fear. (?I thank Mr Ghulam Jilani.)

Further Details

BK211626 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 21 Dec 84

[Excerpts] President General Mohammad Ziaul Haq has thanked the nation for overwhelmingly exercising its clear and positive opinion in the referendum which will help in accelerating the process of Islamization and will enable the 90 million people of Pakistan to march speedily toward their goal. Addressing the nation over radio and television this evening, the president emphasized that the referendum has consolidated national strength and unity and has made it clear that we have very little diffrences among us and the national harmony and unity remain uppermost in our minds.

The president referred to his plan to hold national and provincial assemblies and Senate elections before 23 March of next year. He reiterated that the referendum is not a substitute for elections which will be held according to the program. He said he will soon make an announcement in this regard after consultations with the Cabinet.

The president also announced remissions in prison terms of from 1 month to 1 year. Many prisoners will benefit from this concession. The president expressed the hope that these prisoners will become useful citizens of the society and will participate in the efforts for national construction.

The president also thanked the Armed Forces for their role in maintaining law and order on the historic occasion of referendum which enabled the people to cast their votes in a free atmosphere. He specifically expressed appreciation for the services rendered by the Joint Chiefs of Staff committee chairman, General Rahimuddin Khan; Vice Chief of Army Staff General K.M. Arif; the Naval chief, Admiral Tariq Kamal Khan; and the Air Force chief, Marshal Mohammad Anwar Shamim. The president also thanked his Cabinet colleagues, provincial governors and administrations, and voluntary organizations.

AFP: Police Clash With Demonstrators in Lahore

HK211514 Hong Kong AFP in English 1501 GMT 21 Dec 84

[Text] Islamabad, Dec 21 (AFP) — Police brutally dispersed a demonstration in Lahore today by several thousand opponents of President Muhammad Ziaul Haq, who yesterday claimed victory in a plebiscite to make Pakistan an Islamic state with himself in charge for five more years.

The demonstration, preceded by an illegal meeting called by the opposition Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD), grouped 5,000 people according to local correspondents — nearly 30,000 according to the MRD.

The demonstrators, who set out to march through the city, ran into a strong contingent of riot police who cordoned off the area.

In clashes lasting almost an hour, several prominent politicians were hit by batons and police resorted massively to tear gas to disperse the crowd.

About 20 people were reported to have been injured and several arrests were made, local correspondents said.

The demonstration was the biggest in Punjab for five years.

The MRD, which campaigned for a boycott of General Zia's referendum, wants a return to multi-party democracy under the constitution suspended by the army when it seized power in 1977.

Foreign Minister Hopes To Improve Ties With India

BK241125 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 24 Dec 84

[Text] Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan has again said that Pakistan desires tension-free relations with India. In an interview broadcast by BBC on the occasion of general elections in India, the Pakistani foreign minister expressed the hope that the new leadership coming to power in India will review the situation and will be helpful in removing the misgivings, mistrust, and suspicions of Pakistan held in India. Replying to a question on the Indian allegation of arming the Sikhs, the foreign minister reiterated that Pakistan rejects these totally baseless allegations.

SRI LANKA

Jayewardene on Terrorism, Indian Stand on Tamils

BK221556 Colombo Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 22 Aug 84

[Text] We have no idea as to what action the Indian Government would take with regard to the problem of terrorism in Sri Lanka until the Indian elections, which are to be held on the 24th of this month. This was stated by President J.R. Jayewardene when he spoke as chief guest at the presentation of Swaran Bhumi [land] title deeds at (Bulatsinghala) electorate this evening. Mr Jayewardene said that any action that Sri Lanka takes to control terrorism is interpreted by the central government in India and the state government in Tamil Nadu as a measure to destroy the Tamils.

He said that there is information that Tamil Nadu is supporting the terrorist movement. He added that the new government in India should be told that this is indeed a grave crime. Mr Jayewardene further stated that we should act with patience and that there should be discussions with the new Indian Government to try to solve this problem.

The president then explained the proposals at the all party conference to solve the ethnic problem. He said that the people of the north should be informed that we are not opposed to a system where local administration accepts the unitary status of the country and functions under the central government. He added that the possibility of a district council having more powers will be looked into. He said the proposed provincial councils would operate under the central government. The president stressed, however, that the proposals at the all party conference would be placed before the people at either a referendum or a general election. Speaking further, Mr Jayewardene noted that political parties and trade unions could express their views on the proposals which seek to eradicate terrorism. The proposals will be discussed in parliament as well. The issue could also be discussed through letters in the media. The president, however, appealed to the people not to engage in direct actions to oppose the proposal.

Referring to the July disturbances, Mr Jayewardene noted that we have had to face certain difficulties as a result of those events. He added that the situation is now different because of the patience of the Sinhalese people. President Jayewardene noted that we now have to spend money not only on development projects, but on arms as well. He emphasized, however, that arms alone were not enough to suppress terrorism. Mr Jayewardene also said that it has now been proved, even internationally, that the northern terrorists seek not only to divide the country but to destroy democracy.

Terrorist Attack at Point Pedro 'Foiled'

BK230210 Colombo Overseas Service in Hindi 0130 GMT 23 Dec 84

[Text] An attack by terrorists on a security post at Point Pedro in the northern region of Sri Lanka yesterday was foiled. According to official sources, the terrorists [words indistinct] security forces began firing. No security personnel was injured. No damage was caused.

Security forces believe that many terrorists were injured in the shelling, but other terrorists took them into the jungle.

The national security minister, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, informed the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation this morning that yesterday [words indistinct] in a camp many terrorists were arrested.

Fishermen used to be there, but after the terrorist attack they left the place. (Tokiyayi) and Nayaru are now under the full control of the security forces.

Delhi Cites Athulathmudali on Point Pedro Attack

BK240446 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0245 GMT 24 Dec 84

[Text] The Sri Lanka Government has announced that its Armed Forces will now use rockets and large-scale arms against Tamil militants. The national security minister, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, has said that the mortars were used last Friday to repel an attack on Army camp at Point Pedro in the northernmost part of the country.

Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan secuirty forces have evicted about 5,000 Tamils from their homes in 5 villages in north, east, and Mullaitivu District. According to an agency report, about 1,000 villagers have fled to the jungles (?in fear.)

Delhi on Cabinet Differences on Ethnic Bill

BK231254 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 23 Dec 84

[Text] In Sri Lanka, differences are reported to have cropped up within the Cabinet over the government's draft bill to resolve the ethnic problem.

The UNITED NEWS OF INDIA reports that the industries minister, Mr Cyril Mathew, has publicly voiced opposition to the bill. In a statement in Colombo, Mr Mathew questioned the move to reintroduce the second chamber.

Industries Minister Mathew Resigns

BK240749 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 24 Dec 84

[Text] In Sri Lanka, the industries and scientific affairs minister, Mr Cyril Mathew, has resigned over President Jayewardene's draft proposals for a solution to the country's ethnic problem. REUTER, quoting official sources, says Mr Mathew submitted his resignation this morning and President Jayewardene accepted it.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Raps Islamic, OPEC Conferences

GF211300 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1100 GMT 21 Dec 84

[Friday Arabic sermon delivered by Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Tehran Friday imam ad interim and Majlis speaker, at Tehran University on 21 December — recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Peace be upon you, Muslim brothers and sisters. Two important conferences are currently being held in Sanaa and Geneva. Muslim countries are participating in these two conferences. Oil ministers of OPEC countries are meeting in Geneva and foreign ministers of 46 Muslim countries and the representatives of 30 Islamic organizations are meeting in Sanaa. The eyes of both friends and foes are focused on Geneva and Sanaa and are watching the conduct of the conferees, their statements, and their resolutions.

The strange thing is that on the eve of the two conferences and during the period they were being held, the usurper Israel impudently and savagely launched attacks with its mechanized forces against the oppressed villagers of southern Lebanon, destroyed the homes of unarmed Muslims, dismembered the bodies of women and children under the debris of houses that were run over by tanks, and transferred many people from their homes to horrifying Zionist prisons. The strange thing is that the enemies of Islam were confident that the Muslim world will not be angry and will not retaliate, for they do not fear the resolutions that may be adopted by the delegates of Muslim countries at the conferences. Even more important is the fact that Muslims, and particularly Muslim Arabs, are safeguarding the enemies' security, stability, and peace of mind through these [word indistinct] meetings.

One of the reasons for such a regrettable situation is that some Muslim countries do not truly believe in Islam — indeed they program their interests in a manner that is contrary to the interests of Islam and Muslims. They are stooges and agents of the infidels. Some of them have declared their loyalty to the Western and Eastern oppressor powers that are seeking to dominate the world before they declared their loyalty to Muslim societies. Some of these countries put their own private interests before the general interests of Islam and Muslims, for they do not show concern for the Muslims' causes of destiny. We shall cite an example for each group:

When the foreign minister of Iraq, Tariq Hanna 'Aziz, is a Christian and at the same time a Zionist — how can one expect that he will defend the interests of Islam? Is this not a repetition of the incident when a Christian muezzin was used to raise the call to prayers from the minarets of a Muslim mosque? The inhabitants of Homs then said: There is no God but God.

The majority of those participating in the Islamic conference are defending Egypt's return to the ICO and turn a blind eye to the traitorous Camp David Accords which split the Muslim front facing Israel, humiliated Muslims, and strengthened the Zionists. The Camp David Accords were unanimously condemned by conferences at the time and Egypt's apostasy was proclaimed. So what should Israel be afraid of? Should it fear such a conference? Why should it not flex its muscles in Lebanon during the period the Islamic conference is convening and why should it not belittle such conferences?

When the Shah Hassan [of Morocco] opposes the views of Muslims and the decisions of Islamic conferences at OAU meetings and the oppressed Sahrawi people are slaughtered in order to safeguard U.S. interests, will our enemies attach any importance to such conferences and the resolutions they adopt?

When all the members of the conference know that the Iraqi Ba'thists have committed aggression against an important member that is pursuing an effective Islamic and revolutionary course — an aggression that has led to heavy losses in men and materiel — and when the other members are supporting the aggressor and are not defending the victim of aggression at all but are insisting on forgiving the aggressor criminal, such a conference can never be taken seriously.

One can cite similar examples at OPEC conferences as well. When some people overtly reassure the enemies of Islam that OPEC members will not use oil to achieve their political ends and will not use it as a weapon against Israel and its protectors, the enemies will find the road open to them to use all weapons against us — they will even be able to benefit from our oil and from the North [Sea] oil and use them as weapons against Muslim countries. Regrettably, we are witnessing this clearly now. Why do we Muslims not benefit from this powerful weapon which almighty God has granted us? Why do we not use it to stave off the evil of the Zionists from usurped and oppressed Palestine and the other Muslim lands.

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. "Say he is one God, the everlasting refuge, who has not begotten, and has not been begotten, and there is none equal to Him." [Koranic verses] Peace and God's mercy be upon you.

Joint Staff Command Issues Battle Communiques

Communique No 1948

LD211548 Tehran IRNA in English 1534 GMT 21 Dec 84

[Text] Tehran, Dec. IRNA — The Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces announced in its 1948th communique issued today that enemy positions and fortifications were zeroed in on by the Islamic combatants in the western border fronts of Ilam and Bakhtaran as a result of which 22 group bunkers were demolished and their crews were killed during the preceding 24 hours.

Four Iraqis were killed and about 10 others were wounded in the northwestern fronts of Marivan during the said period. Three group bunkers and one observation post were also set ablaze and demolished in these fronts.

In the southern fronts, the Iraqi engineering activities were halted and their fire was extinguished during this period and in west of Arvand River five group bunkers were destroyed. Residential areas in Abadan were barraged by Iraqi long-range fire during the past day as a result of which five houses and shops were damaged, concluded the joint staff command communique.

Communique No 1949

LD221627 Tehran IRNA in English 1610 GMT 22 Dec 84

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 22, IRNA — Artillery duels were reported friday in the Piranshah, Sar Dasht, and Marivan areas, where the Iraqi forces suffered heavy casualties, said the Joint Staff Command in its communique No. 1949 Saturday.

Meanwhile, 20 Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded and 6 observation posts and weaponry positions destroyed by the fire of the Muslim Iranian combatants in these fronts.

Artillery fire continued in Bakhtaran and Ilam Provinces and the southern fronts where the exchanges were reported to be intense in the Zurbatiyah and Ein-Khosh regions.

In the same regions, Islamic combatants controlled enemy supply and engineering activities and paralyzed their efforts to change their units or patrol the area.

Last Thursday, two enemy patrol groups in Chazzabah and Sumar were subjected to Iranian fire and forced to retreat.

In the western front the enemy suffered a large number of dead and wounded while a number of its bunkers and observation posts were destroyed.

In the Arvand River area, the gendarmerie forces bombarded Iraqi positions and interrupted their engineering activities and supply efforts.

On the Faw-Basra axis, ten weaponry positions were destroyed and 15 Iraqi soldiers killed or wounded.

The Iraqi forces bombarded the city of Abadan Friday damaging three houses and shops.

Communique No 1950

LD231626 Tehran IRNA in English 1600 GMT 23 Dec 84

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 23, IRNA — Iran's Muslim combatants bombarded Iraqi positions across all fronts Saturday, said Joint Staff Command Communique No. 1950, today.

In the Sardasht area, Iraqi forces tried to infiltrate an Iranian base but were met with stiff resistance forcing them to retreat with heavy casualties. The fleeing enemy troops also left behind a quantity of arms which were seized by the Iranian combatants.

In the northwestern front, enemy casualties were reported at 25 dead or wounded and 7 weaponry positions and 3 observation posts destroyed.

In the western front, Muslim combatants maintained the upper hand in artillery duels, silencing the enemy guns and killing or wounding 10 Iraqi soldiers. The enemy also lost nine trucks, six weaponry positions and one mortar launcher.

In the southern front, Muslim combatants controlled enemy engineering activities, while reinforcing their own positions. They also forced two Iraqi patrol groups to retreat under heavy fire, in the (Pich-Angizeh) and Shilat regions.

In the Sharhani region, enemy patrols tried to infiltrate Iranian positions, but encountered stiff resistance, forcing them to flee sustaining 11 dead.

The city of Abadan was bombarded by Iraqi long-range artillery which damaged four houses and caused fire in another.

Foreign Minister Velayati on Gulf War, ICO

Says War 'Will Continue'

LD221139 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1024 GMT 22 Dec 84

[Text] Sanaa 22 Dec (KUNA) — Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati announced today that the Iraqi-Iranian war will continue. He simultaneously reiterated his country's position towards the war, and said, "Iran will not stop this war until it gets," what he termed, its rights.

With this announcement made at a news conference which he held today at noon in the Islamic Center dedicated for the Islamic countries foreign ministers, Velayati contradicted the draft resolution reached last night by the political committee.

The draft resolution called on Iraq and Iran to negotiate a cease-fire between the two countries who have been at war since September 1980.

Conference sources said last night that both sides approved the draft resolution, but Velayati said today at his news conference that Iran had reservations about the resolution and did not approve it.

Velayati said. "Iran did not attend the two previous Islamic conferences in Dhaka and Jeddah because they were biased and not neutral." He added: "Iran will boycott any Islamic conference in the future if it believes it will not be neutral."

Iraq earlier today asked Iran to clearly and frankly explain its position towards the draft resolution which was approved by the Islamic countries Foreign Ministers Conference.

The Iranian minister was speaking in Persian, with translation into English by former Iranian Ambassador to Kuwait 'Ali Shams Ardakani. When asked to speak in Arabic, he said in correct Arabic "I am sorry" and refused to speak in that language. The result was that some Gulf and Arab press delegations withdrew from the news conference.

Reiterates Demands for Cease-Fire

LD221526 Tehran IRNA in English 1526 GMT 22 Dec 84

[Text] Sanaa, Dec. 22 IRNA — In an interview with reporters minutes after the suspension of the fifteenth session of the foreign ministers of the Islamic Conference Organisation here today, Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati reiterated Iran's terms and conditions for a ceasefire with Baghdad reminding

that the Islamic Republic would not listen to any mediator clinging to his earlier attitude in relation with the war. He said the Iranian people love the Iraqis, but that the ruling regime in Baghdad has long since proved that it is not amenable to any reason but to forcible measures. He deplored what he described as the "failure" of the Islamic Conference Organisation in maintaining unity among members of the organisation and called for a revision of the conference's administrative policies.

Velayati also recalled Iran's move for inclusion of certain items in the final resolution of the conference such as the adoption of drastic measures against the Al-Quds occupying regime and condemnation of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Referring to the Iraq-Iran war he said as long as the ruling regime in Iraq continues to remain in power the Islamic Republic would not under any condition agree to a negotiated settlement of the war. He also criticized the Islamic Conference Organisation for outraging its principles of impartiality in relation with the Iraq-Iran war, and said only that part of the ICO's resolution which addresses the two countries with an identical tone would be heeded by Iran.

Comments on ICO Meeting

GF230805 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 23 Dec 84

[Interview granted to correspondent of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran by Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, following his return from Sanaa on 22 December — recorded]

[Excerpts] [Unidentified correspondent] Mr Velayati, we noted the active participation of the Iranian delegates at the ICO conference of foreign ministers in Sanaa. Please give us the conclusions of this conference.

[Velayati] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. As I said in my interview before leaving Tehran for Sanaa, we do not accept the current configuration of the ICO and have fundamental objections to the way it works. However, it is a gathering of Islamic countries and it is necessary for the Islamic Republic to attend gatherings of Islamic countries. Our place should not be vacant since we are in the best position to explain our views. This is a tribune for our voice to be heard by the world of Islam and the world in general. Our participation in the ICO does not mean that we approve of all the methods of this conference. During our discussions at the conference we clearly and unambiguously outlined our views, as we always do.

Three major topics were included in my speech as the official positions of the Islamic Republic. They were the issue of Palestine and related issues such as Camp David and the return of Egypt. The other was the issue of Afghanistan and the Soviet invasion of that country and finally the Iran-Iraq war.

In the first case we took a very strong position against the Egyptians and Camp David. We did this in the political committee which was working in parallel with the general session, as well as in the preliminary session of the conference which our friends had already attended. We strongly criticized the last ICO meeting's decision in which the Islamic republic did not participate.

With respect to Palestine we put forth some resolutions and the important ones were approved. One was a suggestion by us that the issue of Palestine is an Islamic one and all Islamic nations and countries must be involved with this. Even though some opposed it, as a result of the effort of our colleagues, this was approved. The second point was our move in stopping the expansion of Camp David. A resolution was proposed by the Islamic Republic of Iran and approved by the conference concerning an end to moves to bring Israel out of isolation. In other words this means opposing the expansion of Camp David.

Also, on the basis of a proposal by the Islamic Republic of Iran, it was decided that all 46 Islamic countries which had participated in the Sanaa meeting will reduce their relationship with the United States proportional to the United States increasing its support for Israel. This was approved by the conference.

Another proposal by the Islamic Republic of Iran which was approved was the issue of setting up foundations in the Islamic countries to combat decadence, promote virtue, and fight vice. This proposal was raised in the cultural committee and, even though almost 10 Islamic countries opposed this, it was finally approved owing to the efforts of the Islamic Republic.

Another issue was the Iran-Iraq war. A number of countries, which, I should say, mostly support Iraq, were trying to bring the Iran-Iraq war to some sort of a mediated end. Both in our speech, during the session of political committee and in our press conference today, we clearly outlined our official position. This position is that so long as Saddam and the Ba'thist regime are in Iraq, any political negotiations or discussions on a ceasefire with this regime is condemned and our combatant forces will continue their battle with this aggressive regime until the achievement of final victory.

Our position with respect to Afghanistan was also very decisive. We asked for a unified stand and positive aid from the Islamic countries for Afghanistan to liberate the Afghan nation from the aggressors. We made a number of proposals and amendments which were approved. The important point was our very good and close coordination with progressive Islamic countries, which, in the history of our international moves, has been unprecedented. We had repeated sessions and both in the political committee and in the general session our position was completely coordinated.

'Reservations' With Preamble Praising Iraq

LD221453 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1320 GMT 22 Dec 84

[Text] Sanaa 22 Dec (KUNA) — KUNA has learned from official sources at the conference of Islamic foreign ministers that the Iranian reservation with the resolution regarding the Iraqi-Iranian war was restricted to the preamble.

The sources explained that the Iranian reservation was specifically with the paragraph praising Iraq and its response to the UN and UN Security Council resolutions.

Oil Ministry Issues Statement on OPEC Conference

GF231926 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 23 Dec 84

[Text] The Oil Ministry today issued a statement in which it said: If the OPEC members at the current second round of talks by ministers of this organization do not adhere and support the decisions contained in the draft of the first session of the OPEC talks concerning the detailed implementation of the shares allocated to the members, and the sale of crude oil and all other points mentioned in that draft, then we will be expecting regrettable events to befall OPEC.

The Oil Ministry statement added that the non-compliance by OPEC members, and their stubbornness toward what has already been mentioned, will lead to a price war. The price of a barrel of oil will fall to dollars 15 which approximately equals the produc- tion costs in some oil-exporting countries.

The statements added that OPEC members must resist international pressures so that this organization can organize the resistance of the Third World countries and international policy in the next few years in order to continue to survive and defend the interests of the oppressed and the destitute people in the world.